

Freedom Watch

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Soldiers brought home, touch hearts

Story and photos by Cpl. Keith Kluwe
109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — Two servicemembers were killed and one seriously wounded in an ambush March 29 in southern Afghanistan.

Army Sgt. Orlando Morales, 33, a native of Manati, Puerto Rico and Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Jacob L. Frazier, 24, of St. Charles, Ill., were the first combat casualties in Afghanistan since Sgt. Steven Checo of the 82nd Airborne Division was killed by hostile fire in December.

The seriously wounded soldier, who for security reasons is referred to as Tom, received care from a number of medical team members before going home to recover.

Tom was shot on his right side, destroying one of his kidneys, perforating his diaphragm and puncturing his lung. Another round went through his right hand and another round grazed his head.



A mixed crew of soldiers and airmen move "Tom" into the back of a waiting C-17 so he could be moved to a hospital in Germany. "Tom" is a U.S. Army Special Forces soldier who was wounded in an ambush March 29.

He was also cut over his left eye.

The Forward Surgical Team saved his life in the operating room at Kandahar Air Field. They removed his damaged organ and

closed the hole in his diaphragm and lung.

They operated on his hand and closed the wounds he had above his eye and on the

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Historians, recording the past for the future

Story and photos by
Pfc. Christina Carde
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — As the U.S. military moves forward onto future operations, the mission of some is to ensure the great deeds of the past are always remembered and on record for future military generations.

Story writing, mission documentations, and artifact recovery are some of the duties the 326th Military History Detachment, Columbus, Ohio performs in their mission of telling the Army's story.

"Our mission here is to docu-



Two 1920 French TF-17 tanks discovered in the Kabul Tank Refurbishing Center await shipment to the Patton Museum, Fort Knox, Ky.

ment mission accomplishments and information on relics found in country," said Maj. Charles Boyd, 332nd MHD. "We also accompany units on operations to determine whether weapons and other artifacts have any histori-

cal value and help troops with relics they find that they want to take home."

According to Boyd, a lot of work goes into preparing an artifact for shipment back to the states.

"Most of the artifacts we have found in Afghanistan consist of shotguns, weapon caches and other rare items such as tanks and old armored car personnel carriers," said Boyd. "Once they are brought to us, we begin the process of preparing them for

acceptance to a museum."

In order for an artifact to gain acceptance to a military museum in the states, it must possess some historical value.

"Many units that find weapons such as AK-47's and other small arms on missions turn them into us hoping we can use them as historical artifacts and more importantly, keep the enemy from using them again," said Boyd. "Unfortunately, most military museums have too many of these items and won't accept them unless they have some significance. Normally, they end up

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World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



A statue of Saddam Hussein falls in front of the Iraqi Olympic Committee headquarters after it was burned on Wednesday.

Celebration, bullets in Baghdad

BAGHDAD — As residents of Baghdad celebrated the apparent fall of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's regime, U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld Wednesday cautioned that portions of Iraq "are still hotly contested and will be for some time."

In central Baghdad's Firdos Square, cheering and chanting Iraqis danced atop a toppled statue of Saddam, dragged off its massive stone base by U.S. Marines in a tank recovery vehicle.

The Iraqis broke the statue into pieces and dragged its head through the streets, while others — including children — pounded it with shoes, an act considered a supreme insult in the Arab world.

"Saddam Hussein is now taking his rightful place alongside Hitler, Stalin, Lenin, Ceausescu in the pantheon of failed brutal dictators, and the Iraqi people are well on their way to freedom," said Rumsfeld.

Opposition leader claims Saddam is alive

NASIRIYA — A key Iraqi opposition leader says he has information that Saddam Hussein survived an airstrike in Baghdad and escaped from the capital with at least one of his sons.

However, U.S. Defense Secretary Donald

Rumsfeld said he did not know whether Saddam was dead or alive. "He's either dead, or he's incapacitated, or he's healthy and cowering in some tunnel someplace trying to avoid being caught. What else can one say?" Rumsfeld said.

Iraqi National Congress leader Ahmad Chalabi told CNN Wednesday the unconfirmed reports indicated that the Iraqi president had taken refuge in the city of Baqubah, northeast of the Iraqi capital.

White House urges caution

WASHINGTON — Three weeks into a war that divided Europe and raised questions at home, the Bush administration on Wednesday savored the images of jubilant Iraqis celebrating the crumbling of Saddam Hussein decades-long grip on power.

It was, said White House spokesman Ari Fleischer, a "historic moment."

Throughout the day, administration officials blended cautionary notes with their welcoming comments about the events transpiring in Iraq. There was, said some administration officials, a sense of vindication at the White House following weeks of questions about the progress of Operation Iraqi Freedom and continued criticism at home and abroad about the U.S.-led war.

That criticism of the war plan clearly rankled the administration. In New Orleans, Vice President Dick Cheney addressed a conference of newspaper editors and poked fun at "some retired military officers embedded in TV studios."

Said the vice president: "But with every day and every advance by our coalition forces, the wisdom of that plan becomes apparent."

Marines take fire at university

BAGHDAD — Moving into the Iraqi capital from the east, U.S. Marines came under attack Wednesday afternoon at Baghdad University and stormed onto the campus to return fire. CNN Correspondent Martin Savidge, embedded with the 1st Marines, 7th Battalion, said the university campus was a battlefield at one point, with black

smoke rising from buildings and machine-gun fire ripping past.

"This was not the exact reception ... anticipated," Savidge reported while under fire. "There's a lot of smoke and dust now and fire. ... [It's] a far cry from the jubilant crowds ... just hard to imagine two blocks away."

Savidge said his truck, being towed by a Marine vehicle, was dragged over the wall of the campus. His truck stalled in the middle of the battlefield with deflated tires, and an engineer worked frantically to restart it.

The firefight erupted, he said, suddenly after a long stretch of road where Iraqis gathered on street corners to cheer on the Marines.

After the battle, Savidge said Marines went door-to-door in university buildings to ferret out Iraqi fighters.

Red Cross halts operations

GENEVA — The International Committee of the Red Cross said it was temporarily halting its work in Baghdad because of the "chaos" in the Iraqi capital. It also announced that a Canadian Red Cross staffer had been killed in crossfire.

Nada Doumani identified the victim as Vatche Arslanian, 48. She confirmed that he died when the car he was in was caught in crossfire Tuesday.

She said two other officials with Arslanian escaped but as many as 12 people were believed to be dead in the incident. She said the group "will assess the situation" to determine when it will resume its work in the city.

"ICRC delegates and local staff have been unable to move about in Baghdad since this morning. Given the chaotic and totally unpredictable situation in the city, getting from one place to another involves incalculable risks," an ICRC statement said Wednesday.

The ICRC earlier said it was suspending visits to hospitals in the city because of the dangers.

The war is over according to Mohammed Aldouri, Iraq's ambassador to the United Nations.

U.S. News

(Compiled from CNN.com)



Members of Dearborn, Michigan's Arab-American community hit a poster of Saddam Hussein with their shoes, hands and American flags Wednesday.

Arab-Americans rally after Saddam statue toppled

DEARBORN, Michigan — Shortly after television pictures Wednesday showed U.S. troops toppling a huge statue of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in Baghdad, about 2,000 people in the heavily Arab-American community of Dearborn, Michigan, gathered to celebrate.

Many held signs that read "Free Iraq" and "Thanks USA!" One read "Saddam gone with the wind." Many women, wearing headscarves, happily held their children, who waved American flags.

"We are 4 million in exile," said Husham al-Husainy, a leader of the Muslim Iraqi community here. "Two million people got killed by Saddam. Hundreds of thousands of men, women and children in prison. What do you expect? It is a celebration. Thanks God."

Family cheers as Marine leads statue's destruction

NEW YORK — Cheers erupted Wednesday morning as a Brooklyn family watching television recognized their son and brother as the Marine who played a lead role in toppling a statue of Saddam Hussein in a central square in Baghdad.

The image of Cpl. Edward Chin, 23, of the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines Regiment, was broadcast on TV screens around the world as U.S. troops joined a crowd that was attacking the statue.

In central Baghdad's Firdos Square, Chin

climbed the outstretched arm of an M88 Tank Recovery Vehicle to fasten a cable around the statue's neck, and while he was there, briefly covered its face with an American flag.

After the M88 pulled the statue down, the crowd placed a pre-Gulf War Iraqi flag on the statue's base.

Iraqis broke the statue into pieces and dragged its head through the streets, while others — including children — pounded it with shoes, an act considered a supreme insult in the Arab world.

Chinese-American held on charges for spying

LOS ANGELES — A Chinese-American woman helping U.S. government agents as "an asset" on China allegedly stole classified documents from an FBI agent who was both her contact and her lover and sent them to China, prosecutors said on Wednesday.

Katrina Leung, 49, was arrested along with her lover, retired FBI Agent James J. Smith, 59. She was charged with obtaining documents related to national defense for the advantage of a foreign nation.

Smith, a 30-year FBI veteran of the foreign counter-intelligence squad who retired in 2000, is charged with allowing access to classified information through gross negligence.

Leung was arrested on Wednesday morning without incident at her home in the posh Los Angeles suburb of San Marino by FBI agents, prosecutors said.

She and Smith had a "long-term affair" that began when they began working together for the FBI, prosecutors said.

Man who shot daughter's molester receives early release

BATON ROUGE, Louisiana — Gov. Mike Foster granted early release to a man imprisoned for shooting his 13-year-old daughter's molester, saying the father should not serve more time than the girl's attacker.

Foster gave Allie "Bo" Johnson double credit for good behavior, allowing him to go free after serving nearly three years of a

seven-year sentence for attempted manslaughter.

"This does not mean I condone his actions," Foster said in a statement. "I do not support taking the law into your own hands."

The case has drawn widespread attention, including a petition drive calling for Johnson's release.



(From top left) Former Miami police officers Jesse Aguero, Art Beguiristain, Jorge Castello and Oscar Ronda shown in these undated police photos.

Four Miami police officers convicted of corruption

MIAMI — In the biggest Miami police scandal in a generation, a federal jury convicted four officers of corruption Wednesday for planting a gun on an unarmed homeless man or lying about it to protect their colleagues.

The officers, all assigned to elite undercover teams, were charged after four police shootings in the mid-1990s left three people dead and another wounded. One of the victims, an elderly drug suspect, died in a hail of more than 100 bullets.

The police ruled all the shootings justified and state prosecutors declined to bring charges, a point made repeatedly by defense lawyers during the 11-week trial.

Federal prosecutors, however, said the defendants thought they were "untouchable" and they called two retired officers who said a cover story was cooked up one day over lunch a day after one shooting.

A sentencing date was not immediately set.

Confusion about Reserve pay clarified

By Capt. Monica Sneed
126th Finance Battalion

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — As Bagram Air Base continues to expand, more reserve and National Guard servicemembers are being assigned here.

As a result, there has been confusion on the differences between active-duty pay and National Guard and reserve pay options.

Reserve and National Guard soldiers should receive a minimum of three Electronic Fund Transfers per month. Regular monthly entitlements are paid on the first and the 15th of the month, and another payment, refunding the current month's taxes, will be deposited between the third and seventh.

Additional transactions processed throughout the month will be paid through another EFT check payment and appear on an additional Leave and Earning Statement.

Home / Mobilization stations start Basic Allowance for Housing for reserve and National Guard servicemembers. In order to start this entitlement, a copy of lease, rental, or mortgage is required along with a DA form 5960 (Authorization to Start, Stop, or Change BAQ/VHA).

A marriage certificate, birth certificate or court order for child support is also required for those members with dependents. Basic Allowance for Subsistence is \$167.20 for officers and \$242.81 for enlisted. BAH and BAS are split equally between the first and 15th payments.

Hardship Duty Pay is paid at \$3.33 per day not to exceed \$100 per month. This entitlement will read "OTHER CREDITS" on your LES. Hostile Fire Pay is \$150 per month and is either paid on the first or the 15th of the month and is consistently paid on that same day every month.

To start this entitlement, unit personnel must submit a copy of the active duty orders bringing the servicemember

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Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: "The Others." Nicole Kidman stars as Grace, a woman raising two children by herself in a creepy mansion. World War II is over, but Grace's husband never returned. Meanwhile, the two children, Anne and Nicholas, must constantly stay in the dark because they are deathly allergic to light.

Tomorrow: Spade Tournament



Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	<i>Today</i>	<i>Friday</i>
<u>Bagram:</u>	Haze H: 86F L: 56F	Haze H: 82F L: 46F
<u>Kandahar:</u>	Haze H: 93F L: 61F	Haze H: 91F L: 59F
<u>Kabul:</u>	Haze H: 86F L: 50F	Haze H: 77F L: 48F
<u>Uzbekistan:</u>	Haze H: 86F L: 57F	Haze H: 80F L: 54F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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side of his head.

Once his surgery was done, it was the job of the Critical Care Aeromedical Transport Team to move Tom to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

Different members of the team were doing different tasks to get Tom moved.

The Air Evacuation Liason Team

Capt. Russel Frantz, officer in charge of aeromedical operations at Kandahar Air Field, and his crew were responsible for putting Tom in the air evacuation system to coordinate his movement.

"Some people on the medical side tend to distance themselves from their patient because it helps them focus on the injuries," Frantz said, "but if it is somebody you know, somebody who is a friend of yours, it's always a little harder. I didn't know (Tom) but it still hit home because he is one of our own."

Frantz also was thinking about Tom on a different level. They are both husbands and fathers.

"To me, my family is everything. I imagine his family is everything to him too. He is very fortunate to have a second chance."

Frantz only saw Tom for a few minutes



Capt. Kristen McCabe, a Critical Care Aeromedical Transport Team nurse with the 438th Expeditionary Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, holds "Tom's" hand and talked to him on his flight to Germany March 30. "Tom" is a U.S. Army Special Forces soldier who was wounded March 29 in southern Afghanistan.

when he was being moved from the back of an ambulance to the back of a plane, but he still is proud of the job he does.

"We're not here to get a medal. We're not here to get glory. We're here to do one job, take care of patients the best we can and get them from point A to point B hopefully in the same or better condition than we got them.

We don't need recognition for this."

help him survive. I would have been proud at the same time, proud that he elected to serve his country."

The CCATT Team

Maj. Daniel Smith was Tom's CCATT doctor.

"I have a great sense of honor taking care of one of our Special Forces guys who was injured in battle. Here was a soldier wounded in battle, protecting our liberty and freedom and it gave me a great sense of pride to help him," Smith said. "Freedom is never free. There will always be a sacrifice the sons and daughters will have to make to maintain their freedom. I have a lot of patriotism and pride in our country and what these guys (Special Forces) do to defend our country."

Staff Sgt. Larry Minor is the youngest member of the team and was Tom's cardiopulmonary technician on his flight from Afghanistan to Germany.

He monitored Tom's breathing and the drainage from the chest tube in the left side of Tom's chest.

"It feels good to actually do the job we have been training for," treating U.S. combat casualties. Minor's team has moved injured Afghans in the past, but this was his first combat casualty mission. "That's why I'm here, to help that one guy survive. I'm glad he is alive, that his family didn't get that phone call or that visit."



Maj. (Dr.) Daniel Smith stands next to his patient in the back of a C-17 during landing in Germany. His patient "Tom" is a U.S. Army Special Forces soldier wounded in Afghanistan March 29.

The Air Evacuation Crew

Lt. Col. Wendy Tomczak, senior clinical advisor, Operation Enduring Freedom theater, was an Army nurse in Vietnam and an Air Force nurse in the Gulf War.

"Tom was the first American casualty I've moved since Vietnam," Tomczak said. "It was a mixture of feelings for me. There is the officer and the nurse in me, who treated a young man that was badly hurt and that was very touch and go.

"The other part is the mom, thinking Tom is two years older than my son," she continued. "It has made for complicated feelings looking at it from two different angles at the same time. I think if he would have been my son, I would have been so grateful that he survived the ambush and that there were skilled enough people there to



Photos by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Adam Johnston



Maintaining the fleet ...

(Above) Air Force Tech. Sgt. Kristin McCoy, an A-10 crew chief with the 104th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron of the 455th Expeditionary Operations Group, replaces a panel on the first A-10 to go through contingency phase maintenance here. McCoy is normally assigned to the Maryland Air National Guard.

(Left) Maintenance technicians with the 104th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron replace parts on the first A-10 going through contingency phase maintenance here. Maintainers here are accomplishing the first-ever official contingency phase maintenance on the A-10 in the field which will give the aircraft the ability to fly an additional 400 hours.

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turned over to Explosive Ordnance Disposal for destruction."

However, once in a while, items discovered that are initially thought to be nothing more than rusted metal, turn out to have historical value.

"We presently have two TF-17 French tanks from the 1920's and a Russian ACP from the late 60's found in Kabul at the Tank Refurbishing Center," said Boyd.

"These artifacts have been accepted to the Patton Museum in Fort Knox, Ky., and are presently waiting to be shipped."

When items such as these are found, the artifact must be checked by several different military organizations and documented correctly.

"The first thing we do is get the story from the subject matter expert to find out what the historical value is," said Boyd. "Once the story is documented, EOD and Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Detection teams do an examination to ensure the artifact is free of all unexploded ordnances and biological hazards."

"Finally, U.S. customs does their own check for hazardous materials and then Central Command is the final releasing authority. They decide ultimately whether or not the artifact will return to the states," said Boyd.

"Once the museum receives the item, it will remain in their inventory and hopefully one day be put on display for everyone to see."

Even though the artifacts displayed in military museums throughout the U.S. existed long before today's soldiers, Boyd said these items are brought to life, in the stories told by today's subject matter experts.

"We are the collectors of military history," said Boyd. "Every time someone looks at the card that accompanies an artifact behind a glass pane, they are looking at the story of a soldier who discovered that artifact and brought it back to life."

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into theater, and a memorandum signed by the commander verifying the date the unit arrived in theater.

Combat Zone Tax Exclusion will automatically begin once the HFP starts. CZTE is a monthly entitlement and begins the first day the service member arrives in theater. Taxes will be deducted from pay on the 1st of the month and paid back to the service member between the 3rd and 7th of the month in a separate EFT check.

CZTE will appear on the LES as "WITHHELD TAX REFUND" or "OTHER CREDITS" depending on the state of legal residence.

There will be a Reserve Pay Forum at 0630Z Saturday, at the North Dining Facility for all reserve and National Guard servicemembers who have had or are currently having pay issues as well as supervisors who have subordinates who fall into this category or who would like more information. There will be an informative session followed by a question and answer session.



The interior of the remnants of a 1960's Russian BRDM Armored Car Personnel Vehicle is almost completely intact.

Carabinieri shields OEF units

Story and photos by Terri Rorke
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — When someone sees the flaming grenade symbol coming their way, they better know they are in the hands of European law enforcement.

The Para-military National Police or L'arma dei Carabinieri has been supporting Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan since Dec. 2001.

The flaming grenade has been the Carabinieri's symbol since the creation of the Carabinieri in 1814.

That same grenade can be seen on the berets of four intelligence officers here.

Maj. Antonio Frassinetto, commanding chief of the Carabinieri, Warrant Officer Paolo Salvadori, criminal intelligence specialist, Warrant Officer 5 Fabio Dagheeti, current operations intelligence specialist and Maj. Leonardo Albanesi, human intelligence specialist all wear the symbol. The team supervises and coordinates with all of the Italian units in theater, said Frassinetto.

"We are here to provide security and protection to the Italian units," said Frassinetto of the 1st Regiment Parachutist unit, out of Livorno, Italy. Although there are only five of the Carabinieri here, including the commander of the Carabinieri, Gen. Giorgio Battisti, a total of 70 Italian police serve in Afghanistan.

"The platoon (in Khowst) provides protection and security to all of Nibbio Task



Carabinieri are involved in humanitarian aid, combat searches, security, convoy escorting and patrols here in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, said Maj. Antonio Frassinetto, senior representative and chief of Carabinieri.

Force in the forward operating base of Salerno," said Frassinetto. Most of the Italians serve in Khowst, where there is more of a necessity to patrol. There, they are involved in humanitarian aid, combat searches, security, routine patrols and convoy escorting. Other Carabinieri work in Abu Dabi and Kabul.

The international police, as Frassinetto refers to his specialty, are evidently credible in the fact that the American government is requesting the Carabinieri for future exercises.

Recent editions of the Italian newspapers, 'La Repubblica' and the 'il Riformista' say that Washington is specifically requesting the Italian military police as a substitution force in Iraq after it passes through the current military phase. The police would restore public affairs in Iraq by providing stability in a future peace enforcing mission.

This request may be credited by the training and experience the Carabinieri possess.

"The tasks we carry out are everywhere," said Frassinetto, who has been in law en-

forcement for more than 20 years now.

The police took part in the training of the first battalion of the Afghan National Army and protected Afghanistan president, Hamid Karzai, after his assassination attempt in Sept. 2002, said Frassinetto.

He has experience, himself, having served as a bodyguard for the former president of the Republic of Italy, Francesco Cossiga. Today, he supervises the theater's Carabinieri units.

To even be an MP, an Italian must go through an 11-month-long course.

"The Carabinieri are special soldiers for security measures," said Frassinetto. The international police perform specific activities. General enforcement, investigation, criminal intelligence, public order, riot control and searching are all part of a Carabinieri's job.

The Carabinieri's role is not certain to be expanded in Operation Enduring Freedom's future, said Frassinetto.

The MP's future role here depends on what choices are made and what operations are taking place, he said.



Carabinieri (military police) from the 1st Regiment, Parachutist, Livorno, Italy, practice techniques for searching a building here Wednesday.



Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from *ESPN.com*)



The Islanders surprised the top-seeded Senators Wednesday.

Snow earns first career playoff shutout

OTTAWA — Very few people believed coach Peter Laviolette's claim that the New York Islanders were better than the Ottawa Senators.

In the playoff series opener, his team proved him right.

Dave Scatchard, Alexei Yashin and Shawn Bates scored, and Garth Snow earned his first career playoff shutout to lead New York to a stunning 3-0 victory over the top-seeded Senators on Wednesday night.

One day after Laviolette proclaimed his eighth-place team was superior than the Presidents' Trophy-winning Senators, the Islanders backed him up.

"Our team on many occasions in big games has played big games," Laviolette said.

Game 2 of the best-of-seven series is Saturday night in Ottawa.

Despite finishing 30 points behind the Senators who had 113, New York got goals from Scatchard and Yashin in the first period.

Bates then scored midway through the second to knock Ottawa completely off its game.

"We believe that you work for your breaks, and we were working hard and rewarded for it," Islanders captain Mike Peca said.

Making his first playoff start in six years, Snow made a solid save on Mike Fisher's backhand early in the game before Scatchard gave the enthusiastic Corel Centre crowd an unexpected jolt.

Ottawa has a history of disappointing its fans in the

playoffs. Despite seven straight postseason appearances and three 100-point seasons in five, the Senators have just two series wins and none when they have home-ice advantage.

"We were too overanxious," Ottawa captain Daniel Alfredsson said. "We were running around, trying to finish every check — we wanted to do too much."

The Senators, who scored a league-high 87 power-play goals this season, failed to get a shot on their first man advantage when Wade Redden was called for interference at 7:22.

With the teams skating 4-on-4, Scatchard banked a shot from behind the goal line in the right corner off goalie Patrick Lalime's pad and into the net to make it 1-0 at 7:59.

"It was just one of those goals," Lalime said. "I was there and it just hit me right off my leg. What are you going to do? Probably one in a hundred of those goes in. There's nothing you can do."

Yashin, the former Senators captain who was jeered whenever he touched the puck, gave the Ottawa fans something new to boo about at 11:35 when he scored his 10th career playoff goal.

"Yashin had a really strong game," Laviolette said. "He played with a lot of conviction offensively and physically. It inspired me."

Yashin gave the Islanders a 2-0 lead when he was left alone and scored into an open left side just moments after the Senators killed Peter Schaefer's penalty for punching Yashin.



2002 National Hockey League standings

Eastern Conference

Atlantic

(2) New Jersey	108 pts
(4) Philadelphia	107 pts
Pittsburgh	65 pts
N.Y. Rangers	78 pts
(8) N.Y. Islanders	83 pts

Northeast

(1) Ottawa	113 pts
(7) Boston	87 pts
(5) Toronto	98 pts
Montreal	77 pts
Buffalo	72 pts

Southeast

(3) Tampa Bay	93 pts
Carolina	61 pts
Washington	35 pts
Florida	70 pts
Atlanta	74 pts

Western Conference

Central

(2) Detroit	110 pts
(5) St. Louis	99 pts
Chicago	79 pts
Columbus	69 pts
Nashville	74 pts

Northwest

(4) Vancouver	104 pts
(6) Minnesota	95 pts
(8) Edmonton	92 pts
(3) Colorado	105 pts
Calgary	75 pts

Pacific

(1) Dallas	111 pts
(7) Anaheim	95 pts
Los Angeles	78 pts
San Jose	73 pts
Phoenix	78 pts

Turco allows two goals within a 3:48

DALLAS — A sneaky slap shot and a well-executed break.

With those two plays early in the second period, the eighth-seeded Edmonton Oilers grabbed a long-awaited series lead over their postseason nemesis, the top-seeded Dallas Stars.

Ryan Smyth popped a short-handed goal between the legs of record-setting goaltender Marty Turco, then Shawn Horcoff beat his glove, sending the Oilers to a 2-1 victory Wednesday night in the opener of their first-round series.

Edmonton leads the Stars in the playoffs for the first time since 1997, when the Oilers won in seven games. Dallas won postseason meetings in 1998, '99, 2000 and '01 and never trailed in any of those series. Game 2 is Friday night.

"It's only the first game," Horcoff said, "but it's definitely gratifying."

The Oilers came in thinking their best chance to pull off the upset would be to get to Turco early in his first playoff game. He looked solid in turning away seven first-period shots and was bolstered by a 1-0 lead on a power-play goal by Mike Modano.

Then Turco allowed two goals within a 3:48 span early in the second period and Dallas never recovered.

"We surprised ourselves," said Modano, who hit a post early in the first and was stymied by Tommy Salo in the third period. "We had a chance to take control, but we didn't do it."

Salo stopped 20 shots to earn just his fourth win in 16 playoff games. He made a flurry of saves early and late.

Turco made 21 saves, including several big ones. But the two times his defense let him down, he wasn't able to live up to the expectations raised by a regular season in which he set an NHL record for goals-against average and led the league in save percentage.

In addition to coming in with a

better record and better recent history, the Stars came in on more of a roll. They were 7-0-0-2 with wins in four straight, while the Oilers closed at 1-1-3.

Dallas also had a better first period. But mistakes led to those two second-period goals, and three third-period penalties made it harder to rally.

Claude Lemieux was penalized for roughing with 4:06 left, then Derian Hatcher received a five-minute major and a game misconduct for elbowing Steve Staikos.

Brenden Morrow was penalized earlier in the period.

Lemieux was acquired for his postseason pedigree and ability to get under opponents' skin. This time, his aggressiveness worked against his team.



The Stars will need to rebound after their loss.



By Mark Baker

Pvt. Murphy's Law